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16 October 1961 25X1

WEEKLY CHRONOLOGY OF REPORTS CONCERNING THE BERLIN SITUATION  
RECEIVED DURING WEEK OF 10 OCT - 16 OCT

25X1 Late Sept Hungarian Minister of Justice Ferenc Nezval allegedly told [redacted] that there was no reason to become excited over the prospects for future travel to Hungary since "in any case, you won't have any possibilities to arrange trips to Hungary after 15 October." [redacted] [redacted] 25X1

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Correction:

29 Sept The West German Ministry for Refugee Affairs announced that 14,700 refugees had fled from East Berlin and East Germany during the month of September. A total of 47,433 refugees were registered by the Federal Republic between 1 and 31 July [redacted]

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1 Oct East German labor crews demolished a tube mill abutting on the East-West Berlin sector border within the 100 meter wide "cleared strip"--the first publicly-owned building dismantled along what the West Berliners have begun to call the "Death Strip." More than 1,000 men and women leveled the ground near the Ernst Heller bridge over the Teltow Canal, and 400 others began removing sheds near the Massante Bridge. [redacted]

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Approximately 50 Hungarian doctors have responded to regime appeals to resettle indefinitely in East Germany, [redacted]

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3 Oct

Sofia's Vecherni Novini suggested that a settlement of the German problem be modeled after the Austrian-Soviet treaty and described current Austrian-Soviet relations in exaggeratedly favorable terms.

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4 Oct

In conversation with Senator Douglas, Mayor Brandt again called for a 52-nation peace conference, explaining that while he had no illusions that such a conference could produce a satisfactory solution of the German problem, it might buy time and provide an opportunity to set up special commissions to study various technical problems. He pointed out that technical, as distinguished from political, discussions might lead to improvements in the access field and alleviate "inhuman effects" of present total division of Berlin. One objective could be agreement on a fixed sum to be paid annually to East Germany for maintenance of autobahn in place of present Autobahn tolls.

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5 Oct

Fedrep press chief von Eckardt told a press conference that the US and UK were not considering "concessions on important elements of our foreign policy." He asserted that the Allies were insisting on no change in the status of Berlin, and were agreed in rejecting a thinned-out military zone.

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6 Oct

West German truck drivers arriving in Berlin via the Hamburg highway, Interzonal Road #5, reported that they had not been permitted to stop enroute within the GDR and that VOPOS had fined drivers who stopped because of fatigue. There were no reports of a similar ban for passenger cars. [redacted]

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Eight Guideline surface-to-air missiles were observed southwest of Berlin in a convoy which also contained several probable fire control vans. [redacted]

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8-9  
Oct

Returning from visit to New York, Brandt argued against acceptance of the "reality of two Germanys," saying that the German refusal to accept division was also a "political reality." He said that abandonment of reunification would affect German morale so adversely as to jeopardize Germany's relations with the West, and would not deter the Soviets from pressing for reunification on their terms, e.g. under the aegis of a "national-Bolshevist movement." Brandt emphasized that the means for improving the situation lay in technical-level East-West German talks and mentioned discussion of a new land corridor to Berlin as appropriate topic for such talks.

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9 Oct

Mayor Brandt, on his return from New York, hinted that West Berlin police will be equipped with more powerful weapons to retaliate against shooting incidents along the East-West Berlin sector border. "We are not willing to be humiliated by East German threats. Our police are not at the border to look on as our citizens are being shot down."

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Adenauer told Senator Javits that Bonn would extend conscription from 12 to 18 months. Adenauer said an economic blockade of the entire Soviet bloc--undertaken as a punitive measure--has real possibilities, and urged greater Western economic unity in establishing an effective blockade.

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US Mission Berlin reported that statistical data presents mixed--though somewhat encouraging--picture of the West Berlin economy. A greater number of people are leaving the city, but they are not so desperate enough to sell their houses at "fire sale" prices. Savings deposits have declined, but at slower rate than previously. Business firms are making loan applications in significantly large numbers.

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10 Oct

[Redacted]

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Neues Deutschland announced that the GDR Council of Ministers had authorized the Ministry of Defense to extend for six months "certain categories of the National People's Army involving specialized technical knowledge and, in event of necessity, all soldiers, non-commissioned officers and officers whose service would have terminated in the autumn of 1961." [Redacted]

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The US Mission in Berlin reported that a USCOB helicopter had flown out four of the eight refugees who had arrived in Steinstuecken on 8-9 October, and that the remaining refugees would be lifted out the following day. [Redacted]

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In identical notes transmitted to the US, UK and France through the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague, the GDR protested a 5 October decision by West German Laender Ministers of Interior to send a token force of West German police to West Berlin for traffic duty. The notes demanded that the Western Powers veto any such use of West German police in West Berlin and warned against "any misuse of the communication lines of the GDR by land, water or air for the implementation of the West German decision... [which] constitutes an act of aggression which the GDR will counter in the interests of its security and peace as understood by the Potsdam Agreement of the anti-Hitler coalition." [Redacted]

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USCOB resumed token military patrols along the East-West Berlin sector border in the American Sector. [Redacted]

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VOPOS refused to permit a Berlin command patrol, engaged in a deliberate probe, to return to West Berlin from the East via the Sonnenallee checkpoint. The East German police, "whose attitude was firm but not bellicose," blocked the patrol's passage physically when it sought to move through the checkpoint after waiting vainly for an hour for a Soviet officer to appear. The patrol returned to West Berlin via the Friedrichstrasse checkpoint. [Redacted]

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11 Oct



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President Luebke warned that the Bundeswehr might be called upon to fight East German "fellow countrymen" in the event of an attack "aimed at our complete subjugation."  

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Security Alert Police near the sector border in Lohmuelenstrasse fired over the heads of a USCOB patrol which entered an unmarked area that was the center of SAP activity and ignored a command to halt. A SAP officer detained the patrol by surrounding it with his men, while he made "repeated telephone calls" --possibly in response to a demand by the patrol that a Soviet officer be summoned. The SAP officer released the patrol after telling it that the Soviet Kommandatura would not send a Soviet officer and refusing to divulge the name of the man who had fired the submachine gun.  

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12 Oct Foreign Minister von Brentano stated that expanded Federal Republic-East German contacts--"under directives issued by the Four Powers"--would be possible and mentioned specifically discussions about the preparation of an all-German electoral law. Brentano rejected any de facto recognition of the Pankow government, however, saying that in practice it would amount to de jure recognition, he declared that contacts aimed at confederation with the Ulbricht regime have to be rejected. [redacted]

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West Berlin police routed 10 VOPOS and an East German officer who chased a would-be refugee into a West Berlin house near the East-West sector border in the French Sector. [redacted]

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West Berlin authorities announced that plans for sending a token force (30 to 50) West German policemen to West Berlin as a show of solidarity had been dropped. [redacted]

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Bonn's Ambassador to France, Herbert Blankenhorn, stated that it is no longer possible to "sit on our rights" in Berlin and that the time has come for some courageous move, such as establishing a "new status" in Berlin. He opined that Chancellor Adenauer was ready for such a move. [redacted]

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13 Oct VOPOS fired a barrage of more than 250 rounds into West Berlin in a futile attempt to prevent the escape of nine East Berliners, who crashed a barbed barricade adjacent to the American Sector with a truck and then fled on foot.  25X1

Neues Deutschland hailed the cancellation of plans to bring a token "solidarity" force of West German police to West Berlin as proof that the US is unwilling to have current East-West negotiations upset by "professional provocateurs."  25X1

For the second time in as many days, all West Berlin and West German licensed cars carrying foreign and Allied personnel were held up at the Friedrichstrasse checkpoint enroute to East Berlin.  25X1

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15 Oct Neues Deutschland characterized as "extraordinarily dangerous" the situation on the East-West Berlin sector border, and charged West Berlin authorities with triggering "increasing provocations" against the GDR. "Shots are being fired at our People's policemen, hordes of good-for-nothings are being sent to the state borders to provoke our security police with stones and abusive shouts. Agents, whistled back into the front city by West Berlin espionage centers, are stealing across the border, dragging old women with them as a cover against bullets."

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16 Oct VOPOS barred six West Berlin construction workers from entering Steinstuecken via the sole access road across GDR territory. [redacted]

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West Berlin police reported that 27 East Berliners and East Germans had escaped during the weekend of 14-15 October. The police said that at places along the East-West sector border the East German authorities have strung an electric warning system which discharges explosives when tripped. [redacted]

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6 Oct

At a Quadripartite ambassadorial meeting in Washington Lord Hood said that as long as the West's military posture is maintained and public opinion remains constant, it can afford "tough" positions in negotiations with the Soviets--such as that West is not prepared to sign away the Germans' right to self-determination and reunification. He also said the West should not agree to any limitation on West Berlin which does not apply equally to East Berlin. In conclusion, Hood said UK agrees there is no use in exploring European security arrangements with Soviets as Moscow does not appear particularly interested.

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10 Oct

[Redacted]

Assessing current British opinion on the Berlin situation, the US Embassy in London reported that the current mood is one of relief that the US is engaged in exploratory talks with the Soviet Union. The view is widely held that de facto recognition of East Germany is the price the USSR seeks for a Berlin settlement and that the West can and should pay this price. Resolutions to this effect were enthusiastically accepted at the annual conferences of the Labor and Liberal parties, and similar views are likely to be expressed at the Conservative party conference.

[Redacted]

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13 Oct West German Vice Chancellor Erhard told General Clay that the position of Adenauer's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) on Berlin was the same as that of the US. He said that while the CDU would dislike having to recognize publicly the Oder-Neisse line, the party knew it existed and therefore was prepared to accept it. The CDU, said Erhard, could not recognize an East German government, or look with favor on recognition by any of the Western Powers, Bonn would, however, expand its technical contacts with East Germany in such fields as transportation, mail and trade. Erhard did not mention nuclear weapons, but emphasized that Bonn could not accept any terms which would place it in a lesser status than the other Allies.

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